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Mr. V. M. Ramaswami Mudaliyar:—" May I know whether it is the intention of the Hon. Minister to continue these advisory committees on a permanent basis? Or is it his intention to have temple committees elected as soon as possible, as provided for in the Act?"

The Hon. the Raja of Bobbili:—" A measure to amend the Hindu Religious Endowments Act to enable the Government to reconstitute these committees is now under consideration."

Mr. V. M. Ramaswami Mudaliyar:—" May I know whether the Minister is aware that the temples are more likely to be mismanaged by these advisory committees?"

The Hon. the Raja of Bobbili:—" If any specific cases are brought to my notice, I shall look into them, Sir."

Commerce

Protest against the removal of export duty on raw hides.

* 872 *Q.*—B. Pocker Sahib Bahadur: Will the Hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have received any memorial from the Southern India Chamber of Commerce, Madras Chamber of Commerce and the Southern India Skin and Hide Merchants' Association or from any of them protesting against the removal of the export duty on raw hides, and if so, whether the Government have forwarded the same to the Government of India;

(*b*) whether the Government are aware that the Madras Presidency is the biggest tanning centre in the whole of India and that tanning is the premier industry of the Madras Presidency; and

(*c*) whether the Government will be prepared to press the Government of India for a reconsideration of their present decision with regard to the removal of the export duty on raw hides?

A.—(*a*) The Government have just received a memorial.

(*b*) Yes.

(*c*) The request will be considered.

B. Pocker Sahib Bahadur:—" May I know whether the export duty that was introduced was not intended for the protection of the tanning industry in hides?"

The Hon. Sir Hopetoun Stokes:—" I understand that it was so."

Mr. F. Birley:—" May I ask whether the Hon. the Finance Member is himself convinced that the removal of the export duty on raw hides is detrimental to the interests of this Presidency?"

The Hon. Sir Hopetoun Stokes:—" So far as I can judge, it will be so."

Mr. F. Birley:—" Has the Hon. the Finance Member appreciated the lack of consistency in the Government of India's action in removing a revenue-producing duty in the present financial conditions?"

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The Hon. Sir HOPETOUN STOKES:—"I should not be prepared to criticize the action of the Government of India (Laughter)."

Mr. F. BIRLEY:—"Is the Hon. the Finance Member aware of any reason why the tanning industry should be deprived of this tariff protection when practically all other Indian industries continue to enjoy such protection?"

The Hon. Sir HOPETOUN STOKES:—"That is a question which should be addressed to the authorities governing the policy in this matter."

Depressed Classes

Ameliorative work for the Depressed Classes and the revival of the office of the Commissioner of Labour.

* 873 *Q.*—Mr. A. B. SHETTY: Will the Hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) the districts in which the Labour Department is working with a special staff;

(*b*) what arrangements have been made for the amelioration of the condition of the depressed classes in places where there are no special District Labour Officers;

(*c*) what amounts have been allotted for the different items of ameliorative work in different districts in the Presidency, especially to districts where special labour staff does not exist;

(*d*) whether the Government have under consideration the question of restoring the special labour staff in districts from which it was withdrawn; and

(*e*) whether it is proposed to revive the office of the Commissioner of Labour?

A.—(*a*) The districts in which the Labour Department is working with a special staff are—

(1) Tanjore, (2) East Godavari, (3) West Godavari, (4) Kistna, (5) Guntur, (6) Bellary, (7) Anantapur, (8) Nellore, (9) Chingleput, (10) North Arcot, (11) South Arcot, (12) Trichinopoly, (13) South Kanara, (14) Malabar, (15) Salem and (16) Madras.

(*b*) In the areas (districts and taluks) in which the Labour staff is not working, the Revenue Department undertakes construction of wells, acquisition of house-sites, etc., in deserving cases, obtaining the necessary funds in each case from the Commissioner of Labour. In the district of Salem there is no District Labour Officer but the special work is in charge of the Inspecting Tahsildar who does it in addition to his own duties. He has under him one clerk and one peon for labour work. In Madras the work of the District Labour Officer has been entrusted to the Personal Assistant to the Commissioner of Labour and he has a Deputy Surveyor working under him.